

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 17, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2114

Introduced by Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia

February 17, 2016

An act relating to ~~prisoners~~; *prisoners, and making an appropriation therefor.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2114, as amended, Eduardo Garcia. Prisoners: support services.

Existing law requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to contract with a private nonprofit agency or agencies to establish and operate a visitor center outside each state adult prison in California ~~which~~ *that* has a population of more than 300 inmates. Under existing law, those visitor centers are required to provide minimum services to prison visitors, including, among other services, assistance with transportation between public transit terminals and prisons, child care for visitors' children, and referral to other agencies and services.

~~This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that supports and creates culturally competent programs that increase opportunities for family friendly contact during and after imprisonment, that funds and creates culturally competent programmatic support services and reentry strategies outside of imprisonment that support fatherhood involvement, family reunification, and family strengthening, and that supports expanded funding for innovation on culturally relevant parenting, fatherhood support, and young male mentorship. The bill would make related legislative findings and declarations.~~

This bill would appropriate \$1,500,000 from the General Fund to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for allocation to the Counties of Alameda, Coachella, Los Angeles, Monterey, and Santa Clara to implement pilot programs in those counties to provide reentry services and support to persons who are, or who are scheduled to be, released from a county jail. The bill would require the pilot programs to include specified components, including support services for parents and a mentorship program. The bill would also include a statement of legislative findings and declarations.

Vote: ~~majority~~^{2/3}. Appropriation: ~~no~~-yes. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (1) Studies have consistently found that prisoners who maintain
4 close contact with their family members while incarcerated have
5 better postrelease outcomes and lower recidivism rates. Despite
6 this, corrections officials are often obstinate in supporting this
7 communication with respect to written correspondence, visitation,
8 and phone calls.

9 (2) Revising visitation policies to facilitate visits by family
10 members, investing in prison-based literacy programs and less
11 restrictive mail policies, and reducing intrastate prison and jail
12 phone rates would provide prisoners with greater opportunities to
13 maintain close relationships with their families.

14 (3) Research cites that positive fatherhood involvement improves
15 life trajectory for a child. Also, fatherhood involvement in a child's
16 life protects against risk factors that pose harm to children, such
17 as problematic behavior, maternal depression, and family economic
18 hardship. Fatherhood involvement is also associated with
19 promoting children's social and language skills.

20 (4) Specific examples of culturally relevant approaches to
21 parenting, fatherhood support, and young male mentorship include
22 Cara y Corazón, El Joven Noble, and Circulo de Hombres, which
23 have been chosen as the culturally based family strengthening
24 interventions in other initiatives.

25 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that
26 accomplishes all of the following:

1 (1) Supports and creates culturally competent programs that
2 increase opportunities for family friendly contact during and after
3 imprisonment.

4 (2) Funds and creates culturally competent programmatic
5 support services and reentry strategies outside of imprisonment
6 that support fatherhood involvement, family reunification, and
7 family strengthening.

8 (3) Supports expanded funding for innovation on culturally
9 relevant parenting, fatherhood support, and young male mentorship
10 to decrease the risk of violence, suicide, and other traumas that
11 children of prisoners who are under 17 years of age may be exposed
12 to by providing education, skills-based training, and early
13 intervention and treatment referrals to parents, families, and
14 children.

15 *SEC. 2. (a) The sum of one million five hundred thousand*
16 *dollars (\$1,500,000) is hereby appropriated from the General*
17 *Fund to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for*
18 *allocation in the manner, and for the purposes, described in*
19 *subdivisions (b) and (c), respectively.*

20 *(b) The funds appropriated pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be*
21 *allocated to each of the following five counties: Alameda,*
22 *Coachella, Los Angeles, Monterey, and Santa Clara.*

23 *(c) Funds allocated pursuant to this section shall be used to*
24 *create pilot programs in each county to provide reentry services*
25 *and support to persons who are, or who are scheduled to be,*
26 *released from a county jail. Each pilot program that receives*
27 *funding pursuant to this section shall include all of the following*
28 *components:*

29 *(1) Support services for recipients who are parents.*

30 *(2) A mentorship program that employs a culturally relevant,*
31 *population-specific approach that has been employed by nonprofit*
32 *organizations such as the National Compadres Network and the*
33 *Brotherhood of Elders.*

34 *(3) The establishment of a collaborative body of training and*
35 *technical advisors.*

36 *(4) The establishment of a Youth Advisory Council to help inform*
37 *and guide program leaders.*

38 *(5) Leadership opportunities, particularly for youth.*

1 (6) *Services to address mental health issues, including mental*
2 *health issues relating to sexual exploitation, racial and ethnic*
3 *disparities, and trauma.*

4 (7) *An advisory committee in each county to oversee the*
5 *establishment and implementation of the pilot program in the*
6 *county.*

7 (d) *A pilot program shall be eligible to receive funding pursuant*
8 *to this section only if the service providers meet all of the following*
9 *criteria:*

10 (1) *Each provider has a proven track record of providing*
11 *meaningful, culturally based programming, including the support*
12 *of gender specific and gender fluid approaches.*

13 (2) *Each provider offers services that support culturally based*
14 *family strengthening, character development, and community*
15 *mobilization.*

16 (3) *Each provider offers services both before and after the*
17 *recipient's release from a county jail.*